



REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP *on* CULTURE & DEVELOPMENT

6 out of 10 users of social networking sites in the Arab World use them to express political views, according to a new report by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, "Social Networking Popular across Globe". Read the full report [here](#).

Also in this month's newsletter, learn about upcoming RPCD events and webinars, and the latest research products in the MENA region. Don't forget to send us your updates for inclusion in the next newsletter!

A computational resource for the Middle East

The objective of the [LinkSCEEM-2](#) project is to establish a high performance computing (HPC) eco-system in the Eastern Mediterranean region (with priority on Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus, though other countries can be considered), to serve as a resource for researchers. The project builds linkages to integrate regional compute, storage and visualization resources into an e-infrastructure. Twice a year, resources are allocated through calls for proposals. To be granted access, researchers are encouraged to apply to the [call for proposals](#), with a deadline of February 28, 2013. Researchers are invited to apply through the open call for [preparatory access](#).



Research Highlights



[MAWRED Land Data Assimilation System](#)

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture based in Dubai is developing a land data assimilation system (LDAS) to assess water and land use in the MENA region. The Monitoring Agriculture and Water Resources Development (MAWRED) model will use field measurements as well as NASA satellite imaging to produce regional-level information on water balance, groundwater and surface flows as well as country-level information on water availability, land use and crop mix for each Arab state. Interested researchers and policy developers will be trained to use the final software to model specific areas of relevance. *Click here for more publications on Natural Resource Management*



[Islam, Development, and Urban Women's Reproductive Practices](#)

Based on fieldwork conducted in Morocco, this book examines the shifts in women's reproductive practices based on the efforts of the National Initiative for Human Development. The author argues that religion does not hinder the national agenda for modernization and demonstrates how urban women participate in their progress and awareness of reproductive rights. This book will be published on February 26th 2013 by Routledge and is written by Cortney Hughes Rinker, professor of Anthropology at the University of California Irvine.. *Click here for more publications on Youth Engagement and Development*



[Transitional Justice and the Arab Spring](#)

To be published in August 2013 by Routledge, this book looks at transitional justice mechanisms and their applications in the post-revolution Arab world. The release of the book is exceptionally well-timed, with Arab governments facing difficult questions on justice for former regimes.

Against this backdrop, this text reexamines the concept of transitional justice, in order to provide a framework that can heal the wounds of the past in the Arab region. This book is equally useful for policy-makers, practitioners and academics. *Click here for more publications on Democracy and Governance*

Recent RPCD and Research News

“Climate Change Adaptation” RPCD Workshop in Jordan

A group of 35 leading water experts from across the region took part in the RPCD workshop “Climate Change Adaptation - The Pivotal Role of Water in the MENA Region” in Jordan last month, a pre-event to Arab Water Week 2013. The exciting event led to collaborative research grants which will awarded to three creative cross-border teams. The winning ideas were selected by popular vote during Arab Water Week, which was held January 27-29 in Amman. The workshop also led to the formation of a Regional Research Agenda, a statement by experts on future research needed to enhance regional adaptive capacity within the water sector. Participants described the event as “new and innovative” and an “excellent opportunity to network with an impressive group of experts.”

Powering Agriculture

RPCD hosted an informative [Webinar](#) on a new USAID grants opportunity on January 29th. More information about the Grand Challenges for Development can be found [here](#). The Powering Agriculture grants will be made for designing innovative strategies and developing technologies in three main areas: "Clean Energy Demand Generation," "Clean Energy Technology Innovation," and "Clean Energy Business Model Development."

Strengthening Political Participation and Abandoning Marginalization

Al-Quds Center for Political Studies in Jordan, a Partnership Forum member, organized a series of workshops between December 25, 2012 - January 8, 2013, as part of a project to strengthen political participation and eliminate marginalization. The project targets areas characterized by low rates of political participation. The workshops took place in three areas in Amman and Rusifeh, and were attended by 148 activists.

Global Solar and Wind Atlas

On January 13, 2013, the International Renewable Energy Agency launched the Global Solar and Wind Atlas, a “comprehensive information platform on the potential of renewable energy”. The Global Solar and Wind Atlas is an initiative to bridge the gap between countries regarding necessary information and expertise to assess renewable energy capacities. It provides resource maps and other highly useful tools that can help better policy-making for the energy sector. To know more about the Global Atlas visit <http://irena.org/globalatlas>

Upcoming Events

“Climate Change and Water in the MENA Region” at upcoming AWC’s General Assembly

The Arab Water Council will host its General Assembly meeting on February 26-28, 2013 in Cairo, Egypt. RPCD will bring three experts from the region to present cutting edge research on water and climate change adaptation in the MENA region. PF members from Egypt are invited to attend.

Water Footprint Assessment Training

RPCD and PF member Water, Energy and Environment Center (WEEC) at the University of Jordan will co-organize a training workshop on the Water Footprint assessment technique on March 12-14, 2013, at WEEC's premises. The training will be led by Arjen Y. Hoekstra, Professor in Water Management at the University of Twente and the Scientific Director of the Water Footprint Network. The event will include 24 water experts from government, civil society and academia. RPCD will invite all Partnership Forum members who work on this area in Jordan.



Research Tips

Evidence-based policy-making is critical to achieving development targets.. However, linking research to policy has long proven to be a serious challenge. The UK-based Overseas Development Institute (ODI) through its Research and Development Program (RAPID) has been working on bridging the gap between research, policy and practice. They offer easy-to-access and useful resources on translating research into action through their [website](#).

[Visit our website](#)

Copyright © 2012 Regional Partnership on Culture and Development